

Message Text

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ACTION SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 SCS-05 SCA-01 DHA-05 H-02

L-03 NSC-05 JUSE-00 SNM-02 DEAE-00 SSO-00 /053 W

-----052963 260023Z /64

R 251328Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3373

UNCLAS PANAMA 6103

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC

SUBJECT: PROTECTIVE CONSULAR SERVICES

REF: STATE 189686

1. THIS EMBASSY HAS TRADITIONALLY TAKEN SERIOUSLY ITS RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE FIELD OF PROTECTIVE CONSULAR SERVICES, TO THE EXTENT THAT THE SERVICES WE PROVIDE HAVE ALWAYS MET, AND FREQUENTLY EXCEEDED, THOSE STIPULATED BY REGULATION AND DEPARTMENTAL INSTRUCTION.

2. THOUGH WE HAVE EXPERIENCED, AND WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO EXPERIENCE, OCCASIONAL DIFFICULTIES IN CERTAIN DRUG-RELATED CASES--DUE LARGELY TO THE CLASH OF OUR OWN POLICIES IN THE FIELDS OF DRUG ENFORCEMENT ON THE ONE HAND AND CONSULAR ACCESS/ PROTECTION ON THE OTHER--WE HAVE MANAGED SO FAR TO RESOLVE THESE QUESTIONS IN THE SPIRIT OF COOPERATION WHICH GENERALLY PERVADES OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OUR PANAMANIAN HOSTS. WE EXPECT TO BE ABLE TO CONTINUE THESE RELATIONSHIPS, BUT YOU SHOULD BE AWARE THAT, TO THE PANAMANIAN, OUR POSITION FREQUENTLY SEEMS UNCOORDINATED AND SOMETIMES CONTRADICTORY.

3. I AM CONCERNED THAT YOU DID NOT MENTION THE CRUCIAL

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE QUALITY OF PROTECTIVE SERVICES PERFORMED AND THE PRIORITIES AND RESOURCES THE DEPARTMENT IS WILLING TO PROVIDE TO ASSURE THAT THE AMERICAN PUBLIC RECEIVES THIS SORT OF PROTECTION. THOUGH I AM SATISFIED WITH THE QUALITY OF THE CONSULAR SERVICES WE HAVE RENDERED TO DATE IN PANAMA, I HAVE SOME RESERVATIONS REGARDING OUR ABILITY IN MAINTAIN THIS LEVEL OF SERVICE IN THE FUTURE,

GIVEN OUR ESCALATING CONSULAR RESPONSIBILITIES (AN ESCALATION DUE TO THE RAPIDLY RISING LEVEL OF U.S. PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS, IN GENERAL, AND THE HEAVY ADDITIONAL CONSULAR BURDENS WHICH THIS EMBASSY IS ASSUMING AS A RESULT OF OUR NEW TREATY RELATIONSHIPS, IN PARTICULAR). AS YOU POINT OUT, HOWEVER, WE MUST MAINTAIN, IF NOT INCREASE, THE LEVEL OF THESE SERVICES. THIS BEING THE CASE, I SEE NO ALTERNATIVE TO THE EVENTUAL ASSIGNMENT OF ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO THIS IMPORTANT TASK. WITH THIS END IN VIEW, WE ARE CURRENTLY REVIEWING OUR PRESENTLY AVAILABLE RESOURCES AND CURRENT PRACTICES TO SEE WHAT IMPROVEMENTS CAN BE MADE WITH WHAT IS PRESENTLY IN HAND. NEXT, WE WILL TURN OUR ATTENTION TO THE PROBLEM OF WHAT ADDITIONAL RESOURCES WE WILL NEED TO MEET THE ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES WE ARE SOON TO ASSUME, AS A RESULT OF OUR NEW TREATY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE HOST COUNTRY. WE SHALL BE COMMUNICATING WITH YOU SOON REGARDING BOTH THESE EFFORTS.

JORDEN

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NNN

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